



Kent Academic Repository

Song, Miri (2019) *Is There Evidence of "Whitening" For Asian/White Multiracial People in Britain?* Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies . ISSN 1369-183X.

Downloaded from

<https://kar.kent.ac.uk/70579/> The University of Kent's Academic Repository KAR

The version of record is available from

<https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2019.1654163>

This document version

Author's Accepted Manuscript

DOI for this version

Licence for this version

UNSPECIFIED

Additional information

Versions of research works

Versions of Record

If this version is the version of record, it is the same as the published version available on the publisher's web site. Cite as the published version.

Author Accepted Manuscripts

If this document is identified as the Author Accepted Manuscript it is the version after peer review but before type setting, copy editing or publisher branding. Cite as Surname, Initial. (Year) 'Title of article'. To be published in *Title of Journal* , Volume and issue numbers [peer-reviewed accepted version]. Available at: DOI or URL (Accessed: date).

Enquiries

If you have questions about this document contact ResearchSupport@kent.ac.uk. Please include the URL of the record in KAR. If you believe that your, or a third party's rights have been compromised through this document please see our [Take Down policy](https://www.kent.ac.uk/guides/kar-the-kent-academic-repository#policies) (available from <https://www.kent.ac.uk/guides/kar-the-kent-academic-repository#policies>).

'Is There Evidence of "Whitening" For Asian/White Multiracial People in Britain?', Special Issue on Multiracial and Multiethnic Individuals, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*.

Author accepted version

Miri Song

School of Social Policy, Sociology & Social Research, University of Kent, Canterbury, U.K.

Correspondence details: a.m.song@kent.ac.uk

Miri Song is Professor of Sociology at the University of Kent, England. Her most recent research focuses on multiracial people and families, and is published in: *Multiracial Parents: Mixed Race Families, Generational Change and the Future of Race* (NYU Press 2017).

Is There Evidence of “Whitening” For Asian/White Multiracial People in Britain?

Abstract

Growing rates of interracial unions in multi-ethnic societies such as Britain are notable, and point to significant changes in the blurring and possibly shifting nature of ethnic and racial boundaries. Asian Americans who partner with White Americans are assumed to engage in “whitening” – both in terms of their aspirations and their social consequences. Yet little is still known about the *aftermath* of intermarriage, even in the USA. Drawing on this US literature, this paper considers the whitening thesis in relation to multiracial people in Britain, with a particular focus on Asian/White multiracial people. I draw upon the findings of two British studies – one of multiracial young people in higher education (Aspinall & Song 2013), and another of multiracial people who are parents (Song 2017) – to explore these questions. I argue that conceptualizations of part Asian people (in the USA) as leaning toward their White heritages are often unsubstantiated, and deduced primarily from one key factor: their high rates of intermarriage with White spouses. In addition to the variable ways in which part Asian people may relate to their minority and White ancestries, we must consider the ambivalence, tensions, and contextually variable identifications and practices adopted by multiracial people.

Keywords: multiracial, Asian/White, intermarriage, Britain, whitening

Introduction

References to growing ethnic and racial diversity over the last few decades in many Western societies is now commonplace – through population mixing, the emergence of new mixed/multiple identities and affiliations, and streams of migration from an increasing range of countries. The world in which children are now growing up is very different from the one depicted in official statistics (Kasinitz, 2017).

Interracial unions and their multiracial children have been a central part of this growing diversity (Pew 2015; Office for National Statistics 2012; Osanami Törngren et al. 2016). There is little doubt that young multiracial people today more strongly reflect “superdiversity” than does an older cohort of mixed people (Vertovec 2007; Alba & Duyvenduk 2017). While social attitudes toward interracial unions are much more positive in many multi-ethnic societies than in the past, White Europeans clearly find spouses of some ethnic and racial backgrounds more acceptable than others (Osanami Törngren 2016; Childs 2014).

In this article, I discuss the idea of “whitening”, as it is applied to Asian/White multiracial people. The idea of whitening is increasingly widespread in the USA because thus far, most multiracial people are part White, and many multiracial people partner with White individuals (Pew 2015). As such, various analysts have tended to make a number of assumptions about what this bodes for Asian/White multiracials, and for the boundaries of Whiteness.

While the discourse of whitening has emerged primarily in the US literature, it is of relevance to other societies, such as Britain, which witnesses significant rates of interracial unions. Historically, who could be White is changeable and contested. In the past, the boundaries of Whiteness expanded so that groups that were previously considered non-white, such as the Italians, Irish and Eastern European Jews, eventually gained membership into this category in the USA (Ignatiev 1995; Waters 1990). To be seen as White affords a range of tangible and intangible privileges and benefits, many of which are wholly taken for granted, and invisible, to many White people (Frankenberg 1993; Bonilla-Silva 2003). As Richard Dyer (1997) has noted, whiteness is a dominant and normative space against which difference is measured.

But the boundaries of Whiteness are not static, and shaped by changing demographics – migration, rates of intermarriage, and changing social norms.¹ In fact, various scholars have suggested that the boundaries of Whiteness are expanding again, to include post-1965 immigrant groups, who, unlike the earlier expansion of Whiteness, are mostly Asian and Latino – groups who have historically not been regarded as part of the White fold (Yancey 2003; 2006; Lee & Bean 2010; Twine & Gallagher 2008). This paper focuses upon the suggestion that some multiracial people, and in particular, Asian/White multiracial people, are effectively becoming White, or at least honorary Whites. Discourses of “whitening” can refer to self-identification as White, but also a White physical appearance, and a cultural mindset that associates Whiteness with the mainstream, privilege, and the norm, in wider society.

I draw on (and contest) US debates about whitening and consider its relevance in relation to the case of mixed Asian/White people in Britain. I conclude that arguments about whitening (in relation to Asian/White mixed people) are simplistic and often unsubstantiated in some of the prominent North American literature on multiracial people. In doing so, I draw on examples from two British studies about multiracial people I carried out in recent years: a mixed methods study of mixed race young people in higher education (see Aspinall & Song 2013 – henceforth the “higher education study”) and a study of multiracial people and their identification and socialization their children (see Song 2017 – henceforth the “parenting study”). I question whether Asian/White people can be seen as White; I also query the assumption that Asian/White people actually want to, and strive to be, White.

Intermarriage and the expanding boundaries of Whiteness

Within the racially stratified USA, “middle groups” like Asians and Latinos have been regarded for some time as closer to Whites than Blacks, in terms of both their socioeconomic profiles and their social attitudes. Many scholars have argued that there is less social distance between Asians and Latinos, vis-à-vis Whites, than the social distance between Black and White Americans (see Lee & Bean 2007; Lee & Bean 2010; Alba et al. 2017). Historically, while they did usually not claim to be White, there is evidence that some Asian immigrants attempted to distance themselves from the stigmatized status of African Americans. For instance, the Chinese in 19th century Mississippi strove to

occupy a “middle status”, between Whites at the top, and Blacks at the bottom (Loewen 1971). Because Americans of Asian and Latino backgrounds are said to ally themselves more closely to White Americans than to Black Americans, a Black and non-Black racial boundary, in which Asians and Asian/Whites are regarded as part of the White fold, is said to be emergent (see Gans 1999; Lee & Bean 2007; Yancey 2003; Gallagher 2004).

A key basis for arguing that Asian Americans are becoming (effectively) White is their large scale intermarriage with Whites. For many analysts, intermarriage with White people is the ultimate litmus test of integration (see Gordon 1964; Alba & Nee 2003). Large scale intermarriage is said to result, inevitably, in the loss of ethnic distinctiveness and “ethnic attrition” (Duncan & Trejo 2011).

As I have argued elsewhere, this theorizing of intermarriage presumes a great deal, such as the assumption that marriage with a White person will result in the minority partner’s surrendering of attachments to his or her minority ancestries, and that partnering with a White person will translate into automatic social acceptance. It is as if intermarriage with Whites (which is assumed to signal “having made it”) need not require any further investigation (see Song 2009; Rodriguez-Garcia 2015).

However, this tidy picture is problematic. Recent work by some scholars, such as Jessica Vasquez (2011), challenges the idea that Latinos who partner with White Americans are necessarily “whitening”: “Assimilation literature tells us that minorities will move away from ethnic identification and toward mainstream identification. Cultural attachments are predicted to follow suit: In an unrealistically zero-sum game wherein either one does or does not have ethnicity (Spickard 1991:15), natal culture is shed as the host culture is holistically adopted.” (386).

Rather, Vasquez suggests that there are various forms of “biculturalism” adopted by people in such unions, including the possibility that White spouses can “migrate” into Latino culture. There is also evidence of affiliative ethnicity (Jimenez 2017) on the part of (often White) individuals who attach themselves (whether in terms of identifications and cultural practices) to those of a different and distinctive ethnic group. These studies point to the importance of recognizing that cultural exchanges and processes of identification are not solely one-way, or ones that involve ethnic minorities who inevitably “lose” their ethnic distinctiveness and attachments.

In fact, recent scholarship suggests that there is no uniform significance of intermarriage, and that its effects are context-dependent (Rodriguez-Garcia 2015; Rodriguez-Garcia et al. 2015; Alba & Foner 2016). As observed by Rodriguez-Garcia et al. (2015), whether intermarriage causes integration, or the other way around, is difficult to establish, and the relationship between intermarriage and integration is multidirectional and segmented. We still know very little about what partnering with White people means for how minority spouses think about and value their minority heritage(s) and how this is manifest in their daily lives and practices (Song 2009).

The Pew survey (2017) on intermarriage (which compares the rates of intermarriage in 1980 and 2015) found that, unlike White and Black Americans, both of whose intermarriage rates increased, Asian Americans’ intermarriage rate actually *decreased* from 33% (1980) to 29% (2015). Since 1990, there has been a decline in intermarriages between Asian Americans and Whites (and American Indians and Whites), and increases in unions between US born and foreign-born Asian Americans (Qian & Lichter 2011). By comparison, Black–White intermarriage increased threefold over 1980–2008, independent of changing socioeconomic status, suggesting declining social distance between Blacks and Whites (Qian & Lichter 2011).

Furthermore, theorizing on intermarriage, as a key indicator of integration, is typically premised upon the union (usually) of a White and non-White individual. We know very little, therefore, about what happens when multiracial people partner and become parents (see Song 2017; Bratter 2007). As most multiracial people in the US and Britain partner with White people (Bradford 2006), the discourse of whitening has been extended to this population.

Multiracial people and discourses of whitening

Social and cultural Whiteness is now said to be available for some multiracial people. Rockquemore and Arend (2002:61) contend that the fact that some multiracial people are identifying as White is evidence of “an expansion of the rules of whiteness that reduce the absolute need for ‘racial purity’, and instead imply socioeconomic standards and cultural assimilation as the price of admission.” Some prominent scholars of race and immigration now argue that the growth of multiracial people in the US is evidence of the expansion of the mainstream (see Alba et al. 2017). They see this expansion as largely continuous with the experiences of post-war mobility and the inclusion of European immigrants to the USA. With the exception of some people with Black ancestries, the authors argue:

A variety of evidence demonstrates that their ethno-racial identities are unusually fluid and contingent. For adults who are part white and part American Indian, Asian, or Hispanic, these identities “tilt white”, reflecting a sense of affinity with whites. They do not generally perceive racial barriers to their participation in mainstream settings. They tend to have white friends, live in neighbourhoods with many white neighbours and to marry whites (Alba et al. 2017: 14-15).

It is important that we unpack what “tilting White” could mean, in practice, or the contextual factors which can explain such a proclivity. According to the Pew Survey (2015:15) of multiracial Americans, adults who are Asian/White said they have more in common with Whites than with Asians (60% vs. 33%) and are more likely to feel accepted by whites than by Asians (62% vs. 47%). However, what is missing in such data are the reasons for why this may be the case, and it is notable that scholars who argue for the whitening of Asians and Asian/White people seem to ignore the not insignificant proportion of people who feel an affinity with other Asian people, or people who do not marry Whites.

A fundamental reason why assertions of whitening are problematic is that there is a denial and lack of recognition of the forms of racial prejudice that Asian and part Asian people continue to face (Zhou 2004). A number of prominent scholars have argued that Asians are still, at best, honorary Whites, who are seen as perennially foreign, even when they are 4th generation Californians (see Tuan 1998). Asian Americans, some would argue, have not quite achieved full social citizenship, because even with formal citizenship, Asians are still subject to forms of civic ostracism (C. Kim 1999) and discourses of foreignness (N. Kim 2008).

Other scholars argue that another indicator of the progressive whitening of Asian/White multiracial people is their ability to opt in and out of Whiteness. Studies of multiracial people show that it is rare for Black/White people to identify as White (as opposed to multiracial or Black), given the history of the one-drop rule, and the social convention of identifying someone with any visible Black ancestry as Black (see Davis 1991). By comparison, non-Black multiracials, such as Asian/White

people, are said to enjoy a range of ethnic options, so that they may identify as White or in relation to their minority ancestry (or a hybrid identification). Some US studies of how parents (in interracial unions) racially designate their multiracial children suggest that children with one Asian and one White parent can be identified as *either* Asian or White (see Qian 2004; Brunsma 2005; Xie & Goyette 1997; Harris & Sim 2002).

However, some analysts have cautioned against the view that the growth of Asian/White multiracials can be equated with a form of racial erasure (of one's Asian ancestry). In a study of how Asian/White couples racially designate their children, using census data, Saenz et al. (1995) argue: "Counter to the most rigid view of assimilationists, children with a majority and minority parent do not automatically gravitate toward the majority parents' group...." (177). Furthermore, in their volume on mixed Asian Americans, Williams-Leon & Nakashima (2001) challenge the idea that multiracial Asian Americans are characterized by assimilation into a White mainstream and the erasure of their Asianness (7).

While part Black people's ethnic options are historically more constrained than those of other multiracial people, there is now growing evidence that significant proportions of Black/White multiracial people are racially identifying as *both* Black and White (see Bratter 2007; Roth 2005; Rockquemore & Brunsma 2002; Liebler 2016; Khanna 2011). The Pew survey on multiracial Americans (2015:12) also found that while 70% of White and Asian adults identified as multiracial, only slightly fewer (61%) of those with a White and Black background said they identified as multiracial. These studies point to a growing *convergence* (not divergence) between Asian/White and Black/White multiracial people in terms of their identification as multiracial, not monoracial, individuals.

In one prominent mixed methods study, Jennifer Lee and Frank Bean (2007) interviewed 46 multiracial Americans of various multiracial ancestries, of which 16 were Asian/White (the other 30 participants had other mixed ancestries, including 8 Latino/White and other "mixes" that didn't include White ancestry):

For the Asian-white and Latino-white multiracial respondents, claiming a white racial identity does not preclude them from also claiming an Asian or Latino ethnicity; they can be white, yet also be Asian Indian, Japanese, Hispanic or Mexican, signifying that Asian and Latino ethnicities are adopting the symbolic character of European ethnicity for white Americans. (Lee & Bean: 578)

A key problem with such arguments about multiracial Asians (and Latinos) in the USA is the tendency to overstate the ethnic options and flexibility enjoyed by Asian/White multiracials. As discussed below, part Asian people are not always able to claim Whiteness (or identification with an Asian ancestry). Furthermore, such claims about whitening are based on very little empirical evidence, which ignores variation and heterogeneity (for instance in terms of physical appearance), among multiracial people. Lee and Bean's discussion, upon which their conclusion about whitening is based, draws on a small number of Asian/White multiracials, all of whom claim that their mixed backgrounds are largely inconsequential, and wholly symbolic and optional. There are no examples of Asian/White (or Latino/White) people who claim otherwise, or who even express any ambivalence about the retention of their minority ancestries. Nor are there any examples of Asian multiracials

who report that they are *not* seen as White. I find such a neat, clear-cut picture both partial and unconvincing; such sweeping claims about Asian/White people are thus problematic.

In fact, the empirical evidence is mixed and hardly conclusive. Prior studies (especially qualitative ones) in the USA, for instance, in the pioneering edited volumes by Maria Root (Root 1992; Root 1996; see also Mengel 2001; Standen 1996), contain multiple examples of Asian/White people in the US whose racialized experiences and affiliations point to *not* being accepted as White, or being seen as racially ambiguous [and see the range of Kip Fulbeck's (2006) "Hapa" photographs of Asian/White individuals].

In addition to the idea of social and cultural whitening (via assimilation and intermarriage), whitening is also suggested in corporeal terms, in that some multiracial people, such as Asian/White people, are said to be "flexible" in how they are identified or identify themselves – which presumes that their desired identifications are validated by others. Yet, as discussed above, the survey studies that presume that Asian/White people freely identify as White do not investigate variations in phenotype or their experiences of racial prejudice or unwanted "othering" (Fulbeck 2006; Rondilla & Spickard 2007). Many factors, such as cultural exposure to minority heritages and phenotype, are important in influencing Asian/White people's identifications and life experiences (Khanna 2004; Song 2017).

Khanna's (2004) survey of 110 Asian/White multiracial Americans (which employed many open-ended responses) asked respondents about their racial identifications. Interestingly, Khanna found an almost even number of respondents identifying most strongly as white (50.9%) and as Asian (49.1%); yet when asked how they would identify themselves on the 1990 census form (in which one could nominate only one race) these respondents were more likely to declare themselves Asian (34%) than White (16%). Khanna concludes that Asian/White people thus have "some predilection towards labelling as Asian." (p.120) These findings, drawn from a study specifically on Asian/White multiracials, clearly presents a very different picture.

Different heading?

I now turn to examples from the two British studies (the higher education study and the parenting study) to illustrate how Asian/White people in Britain can be quite varied in the ways in which they are racialized by others. In doing so, I problematize the binary way of theorizing multiracial experience as *either* White or Asian, since some mixed Asian/White people may affiliate themselves in ways that are not easily reducible to being either White or Asian, across a variety of contexts. In the higher education study (Aspinall & Song 2013), 326 young people (aged 18-25) in higher education were surveyed about their identifications and life experiences in various parts of England. These young people could be mixed in a variety of ways; Black/White, South Asian/White, East Asian/White, Middle Eastern/White, or minority mix (e.g. Asian & Black). Of these survey respondents, 65 young people were interviewed about their upbringing, and what their mixed backgrounds meant to them. In the more recent parenting study, I wanted to know what happened when multiracial people grew up, partnered, and became parents: how did they raise their children? How important was it to pass down their minority heritage? This study relied upon in-depth interviews with 62 parents who were Black/White, South Asian/White, and East Asian/White. Both of these studies drew on samples that were primarily based in the Greater London and the Southeast of England, though smaller numbers of people were also drawn from the Midlands and Northern parts of England.

Asians in the British context

I draw upon the case of Asian/White multiracial people in Britain to question some of the assumptions made by American analysts about the identities and racial proclivities of part Asian people in the USA. Britain is, of course, a different country, with its own distinctive history, demographics and norms, but I argue that the high rates of intermarriage between White and Asian individuals (especially the British Chinese), and the growth of Asian multiracial people in Britain provides some important insights into the limitations of the whitening thesis which is growing in prominence in the USA.

Britain, and in particular London, has been characterized by “super-diversity” (Vertovec 2007). Much has been written about the ordinary multicultures of large metropolitan areas of England, though analysts have also cautioned against an overly celebratory view of all this diversity, since not all the people within this diverse panoply are necessarily valued or even recognized (Yeh 2014).

Data from the 2011 England and Wales census found that 9% of people were living as part of what the data defines as an “inter-ethnic” relationship (ONS 2014). In comparison with the USA, Black/White unions are much more common (and in some large cities, largely unremarkable), with many young Black Britons in relationships with White Britons (about 62%) (ONS 2014)². About 30% of British Chinese women, and 20% of British Chinese men were also in inter-ethnic relationships (most of these with White Britons). By comparison with Black Britons, and the British Chinese, Britons of Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Indian origins are much less likely to be in inter-ethnic relationships (ONS 2014; Muttarak & Heath 2010).

While “Asian” in the British context refers primarily to people with ancestry from the Indian subcontinent, and less commonly to people from East Asia, such as people in Hong Kong and Japan, I focus specifically upon the case of East Asian/White mixed people in Britain, such as the Chinese, who constitute the largest East Asian origin group. This is because the discourse of whitening in the US centers primarily upon racially mixed East Asian and White people (and Latino/White people).³ Furthermore, there are significant cultural and religious differences, as well as phenotypical differences, between Britons of South Asian, as opposed to East Asian origins. As such, I draw specifically upon the examples of East Asian/White participants (from both the higher education and multiracial parenting studies) as a counterpoint to debates about the whitening of Asian/White and Latino/White mixed people in the USA.

In Britain, especially post-9/11, a key “bright” boundary is that between Asian Muslims and “mainstream” society, as South Asians such as Pakistanis and Bangladeshis (many of whom are Muslim) are often depicted in media outlets as the most problematic “other”, especially in terms of fears around radical extremism (Neer 2008). In comparison with the US context, most Britons of East Asian origin are Chinese, given Britain’s colonial history in Hong Kong. Like the US, the British Chinese have tended to be characterized as a hardworking and (quiescent) model minority of sorts – a population who is not assumed to have suffered racial prejudice or marginalization. However, studies of the British Chinese second generation have pointed to the ways in which they have been racially stigmatized and targeted, especially in relation to their parents’ ownership of take-away food businesses or more recently, depicted as members of criminal triads (see Parker 1995; Song 1999; Yeh 2014).

So while the British Chinese (and Vietnamese) are not (usually) seen as problematic minorities, in the ways that Black and South Asian Britons have been, they do not escape negative

forms of racialization (Back 1996). All too cognizant of such stereotypes, younger generations of British Chinese people have sought to redefine themselves against this discourse by actively participating in forms of local and global popular culture, especially music (Yeh 2014).

My research on multiracial people in Britain [in both studies] does find *some* Asian/White people who reported that their Asian ancestries were largely inconsequential or not very meaningful; some also reported that they were seen as White by others, and effectively lived their lives as White people (especially if they had “White”, and not Asian, surnames). However, my research *also* found a significant number of Asian/White people who said that they cared deeply about their Asian backgrounds, and that they made efforts to cultivate a connection to their Asian ancestries – for example, in relation to the transmission of their Asian backgrounds to their children.

Can Asian/White people “pass” as White if they wish to claim Whiteness?

As discussed above, various studies have argued that Asian/White (and Latino/White and American Indian/White) people enjoy an array of ethnic options, including the choice to identify as White, which is not usually possible for Black/White multiracials. According to Qian (2004:4): “There is no norm for the racial classification of Asian American-white children.” While I agree that people with Black ancestry are more consistently racialized as Black than other multiracial people, this does not then mean that Asian/White people are necessarily (or consistently) seen as White. In Britain, as in the US (discussed above), one main reason why many Asian and part Asian people are not seen as White is that in many contexts, they are still regarded as foreigners (Parker 1995; Barber 2015).

Especially in relation to Black people, there is the strong implication that many Asian/White people can enjoy the status of White people, either because of their putatively White appearance, or because their physical appearance (as Asian) is no longer an impediment to social acceptance. However, there is a great deal of physical variability in how Asian/White people look, according to prevailing norms of White and Asian appearances (see Rondilla & Spickard 2007; Chang 2016; Fulbeck 2006; Murphy-Shigematsu 2012). In fact, in both research projects on multiracial people in Britain, I found many instances of Asian/White people who reported being seen as non-White or somehow racially ambiguous. While a minority of these participants experienced this kind of racial ambiguity in a positive way, others experienced their racialization (as non-White and/or racially ambiguous) in a more negative and stigmatizing way.

In both the higher education study (Aspinall & Song 2013), and the study of multiracial parents in Britain (Song 2017), it is clear that unless one looks (by conventional norms in Britain) entirely White European, one’s membership in the category White was not likely to be secure – and thus one’s desired ethnic option (as White) could not be exercised (Song 2003). In the case of Asian/White people, it is not uncommon to witness a diverse range of physical appearances, so that three people, each with an Asian parent, and a White British parent, can appear more or less “Chinese” or White, or somewhere in between (see Chang 2016; Aspinall & Song 2013).

In the higher education study in Britain, one participant, George, had a Chinese mother and White English father. George reported, ruefully, that because of his “Chinese” appearance, he could never be seen as truly British; in fact, he was regularly assumed to be foreign:

You will probably not find anyone more patriotic than me or my brother.... We’re super patriotic.... It’s a repeated bitterness, actually, to be honest, because it’s that thing of

trying as hard as you can to be British and never having done anything else, and then realising that that life is always going to be beyond your control.

Another participant in the higher education study, Lori, had a Filipina mother and an English father. When Lori was asked how other people saw her, she responded:

Well, I would hope most people wouldn't really notice my race. I don't really notice it in people. Some people are sort of dubious of my background or they don't really know where I'm from ...some people have been a bit ignorant and they will just say [that she is] Asian.

Lori reported that she was assumed to be Asian or somehow foreign; she was uncomfortable with the curiosity that others exhibited about her ethnic origins, as she was often asked about her background by "ignorant" people, who did not seem able to accept the idea that she was mixed, *and* also British. Lori disliked feeling physically scrutinized and objectified, as somehow foreign, and "different".

George did not aspire to be White, and he knew that his physical appearance precluded such a possibility. However, he did identify as a British person, having been born and raised in Britain. Thus, being consistently seen as foreign, and not British, was upsetting for George. By comparison, his sister was consistently seen as White British, and George reported that others were often surprised to discover that they were siblings, given their disparate racial appearances (Song 2010).

This theme of differences in the physical appearance of siblings among Asian/White multiracial people was commonly reported. In the parenting study, Jonathon (who had a Chinese father and White European mother), spoke of how different his and his brother's experiences were, growing up, due to their different appearances:

... and it's a very weird thing. He [brother] kind of...is more white looking than I was, or I am. Especially when we were younger, I looked, people used to say that I looked more Chinese, actually like a Chinese boy, my brother had red hair, very pale complexion, whereas I had the darker complexion, like my dad. So he's never had that racism thing, people have always assumed, or seen him as white, and then when he says his name [a Chinese surname] people say "that's a funny name, what's all that?" But he's never experienced racism...

Like George, discussed above, Jonathon could not have been seen as White, and found being negatively racialized very difficult as a child:

...yeah, I think initially I didn't deal with it very well, especially when I was really young. I didn't want to be different, I didn't want to have all that attention of having the piss taken out of me for being Chinese, so I used to react against it.

Both George and Jonathon were highly educated English/Chinese men with professional jobs. Yet being educated and privileged in terms of high socioeconomic indicators did not guarantee social acceptance and real social inclusion in their day to day interactions in Britain (Lee 2015; Kibria 2002; Kim 2008).

Thus, these claims about the flexible ethnic options of part Asian people, including the option to be seen as White, are partial and do not consider the evidence from other studies. First, claims about the ethnic options of Asian/White people do not acknowledge how much variation there is in the physical appearance of such individuals, as it is not uncommon for part Asian people to report that they are either seen as non-White and/or racially ambiguous. Second, arguments about the (social) whitening of Asian/White people completely disregard the possibility that they continue to experience forms of racial prejudice, ridicule, and assertions of foreignness.

Do Asian/White multiracial people *want* to be white?

Another basis for the argument about Asian/White people becoming White is the implication that, if given the opportunity, Asian/White people *want* to be White. For instance, in survey studies in which multiracial children are racially classified as White by their parents (in interracial unions), how are we to interpret these choices (see Xie & Goyette 1990)? The answer is that we can only speculate about the meanings of these survey responses. Do such responses mean that they see their children as White – or want to identify their children in this way? The issues of intent and meaning, and the constraints underlying such choices, matter – yet they are rarely addressed.

Such survey choices require interpretation, and cannot simply be taken at face value. The problem with interpreting such survey data is that there is no contextual information about how people make their choices. Factors such as physical appearance, socialization by parents (including exposure to relatives, distinctive ethnic practices, language, etc.), the ethnic and racial composition of where people grow up and live, the wider social networks within which they and their families are embedded, are all fundamental in shaping choices about racial identification, and its salience.

While they do not explicitly say so, there is often the implication that Asian and Asian/White people *want* to be White. This is undoubtedly true for some Asian/White people, as may also be true for other types of multiracial (or even monoracial minority) people. But there is no acknowledgement of the possibility that some Asian/White people (and many multiracial people more generally) do *not* want to be seen as White (N. Kim 2008).

In Britain, it is also critical to distinguish between wanting to be (accepted as) British, and belonging within the nation, as opposed to wanting to be White per se. In the higher education study, Mai (who was Chinese and White British) explained that choosing “White” on a survey stood as a proxy for Britishness – and that since she grew up in Britain, Britishness was the primary point of identification for her, even though she did not look White to others: “I wouldn’t put it into . . . what colour you are, in a categorising system. I put it more into your culture. My friends who are of Chinese origin . . . are from the same background as me, so they view themselves, *not as being White but as British.*”

In fact, multiracial people, such as Asian/White people in Britain, may feel, and want to identify themselves (and be seen) as mixed, and to have their Asian ancestry recognized. In the higher education study (Aspinall & Song 2013), the following examples of responses to an open-ended question about how they would describe their racial/ethnic identities point to the importance of asserting mixedness, as opposed to Whiteness per se: “*Half British, three-eighths Vietnamese, one*

eighth French"; "English, Welsh, Swiss, Kiwi, Indian, Singaporean. I am of mixed parentage - this is a good thing". In these cases, the reporting of their Asian ancestries meshed with a stated attachment to their various Asian ancestries – though to differing degrees and in different ways.

In the higher education study, Amelia spoke of the importance of her Burmese ancestry to her sense of self, despite the fact that she was usually seen as White by other people:

So the whole extended family is the Burmese. So the amount of contact I had with the Burmese was far greater than with my dad's [English] side. And her [grandmother's] two sisters married Burmese men. And so all my cousins are Burmese, whereas...[long pause], my grandmother didn't [marry a Burmese man], and so there's a dilution.

(Aspinall & Song 2013).

Amelia's own mother was mixed (Burmese and Maltese), and Amelia hinted at a concern about a gradual dilution of her Burmese "bloodline". Her maternal grandmother was the lynchpin in Amelia's sense of Burmese identity, because Amelia felt a strong attachment to not only her grandmother, but also her grandmothers' sisters, all of whom married Burmese men, and her "fully" Burmese cousins. Yet because of her White appearance, Amelia struggled to assert her Asian heritage and identification.

Some Asian/White people identify as White, not because they wish to be seen as White, but because they may not be accepted as truly (or "fully") Asian. Strict membership rules can make it difficult for Asian/White people to claim an Asian identity (see Kibria 2002 ; Qian 2004). Thus, one significant factor that limits the ethnic options of Asian/White people is that, historically, "full" Asian groups and communities have rejected part Asian people as truly Asian. According to Paul Spickard (1989), because Asians tend to come from traditionally homogeneous societies, they often do not consider biracial individuals as part of their communities.

Various studies have shown that, even when they wish to identify (and be seen as) Asian or part Asian, this may not be possible. For instance, Mengel (2001) recounts a harrowing story of a Japanese/White man who was denied membership as Japanese by "full" Asian peers, because his peers knew of his White parent; yet he was not seen as White either – he was called "Mexican" by some. This young man was seen as a racially ambiguous person who was racially assigned in ways beyond his control; such encounters often involved rejection, misrecognition, or challenges to his asserted sense of self. Although this young man persisted in his identification as both Japanese and White American, for others, rejection of one's identification (and membership) as Asian could result in an unwillingness to identify as Asian, and the assertion of a less contested form of ethnic identification (Song 2003).

Highly general assertions about the whitening of Asians and Asian/White multiracial people characterizes their attitudes and experiences in terms of an all or nothing depiction of such people's allegiances, identities, and attachments. There is no sense of how, in "real life", people are often ambivalent and uncertain about their various senses of selves and/or their ties with others. In fact, a key finding in the parenting study was that multiracial people could feel conflicted and/or ambivalent about how to identify their children, and about how to assert their children's Asian heritage, especially if the multiracial parent had had limited cultural exposure to her/his minority parent's background and/or relatives, or if the other parent was White (Song 2017).

For instance, one common response on the part of Asian/White parents in the parenting study (who had had their children with White partners) was that they were anxious about whether they should or could identify their children as mixed. Such uncertainty was pronounced in cases where the Asian/White parent reported that their child looked White to others – but where the parent still felt a strong attachment to their Asian ancestry. For instance, Jonathon (who was Chinese and White, and had a White partner), spoke of his and his wife’s uncertainty about how they should identify their children on forms.

At the doctors’... we said to each other “well, what do we tick for [his son]?” And I couldn’t actually...I didn’t know, and I felt awful about it, because you think about the visual markers that obviously don’t define people’s identity, but he looks very Caucasian, very white, and in the end [my wife] said “well, he’s mixed race, of course he’s mixed race, it’s diluted but he’s mixed race”. So we ticked mixed race.

But as illustrated in this excerpt, Jonathon was highly aware of the fact that other people may not validate their identification of their son as mixed, given his White appearance. Jonathon spoke of how friends and family would ask about the “problem” of his sons looking White (and quite unlike Jonathon, who did not look White), but having a Chinese surname, and the disjunctures this posed:

So they say “well, how are you going to...what do you think is going to happen with [his son]? In terms of, it’s going to be weird isn’t it, him growing up with the name?” You know, it’s one of the things that a few of my family have said, “you shouldn’t give him a Chinese name, because it’s just going to cause problems for him when he’s older”.

Without such explorations of the context in which people make their choices about their (or their children’s) racial identifications, it is all too easy to interpret such data (especially data from close ended surveys) as definitive choices that neatly reflect the lives of those who have made them. So when some participants choose “White” in surveys, it is often interpreted as just that – that they see themselves as White (or wish to see themselves as White) – end of story.

Another reason why some Asian/White multiracial people in Britain may report a White race or identity on surveys is that it is not uncommon in Britain to report relatively little cultural exposure to their Asian cultural backgrounds – thus limited knowledge or a superficial familiarity with their Asian ancestries (see Parker 1995; Barber 2015). This unfamiliarity can include a lack of knowledge of an Asian language, knowledge of their Asian parent’s cultural practices, and/or contact with their Asian parent’s relatives.

In the parenting study, one participant, Diane, who was Chinese and White, said:

“It’s always been important not to lose that [Chinese] part of me... Even though I’ve obviously lived in Britain most of my life.” Yet as Diane explained, she could feel self-conscious and awkward about not being “really” Chinese: “...yeah, I’m sometimes aware of being different. Sometimes people will see that I look a bit different so ask me about it. And then, as I say, when I meet Chinese people I don’t feel totally the same as... and I

don't feel I belong so... Yes, so sometimes you can feel, well I'm not either. I'm not anything really."

Another participant, Pauline, spoke regretfully about being unable to talk, and interact fully, with the Chinese people she encountered. Because her Chinese mother had never taught her a Chinese dialect (though she did cook Chinese food and expose the children to various Chinese customs), Pauline reported that she did not feel "authentically" Chinese:

And because I can't speak Chinese... then you know there's no relevance there, so I think that's...I know I'm sort of drawn to Chinese people and I want to engage with them but I find afterward there's just so far you can go because you can't communicate with them. It's very difficult.

In contrast with the suggestion that Asian/White people in the US are keen to be seen as White, many multiracial people in Britain saw the loss of minority practices and ancestries as a loss – in fact, Song (2017) found that many multiracial people who were parents (and who had White partners) expressed (sometimes sheepishly) a wish for *their* children to have coethnic or non-white partners.

By growing up in a country such as England, one's first language and primary cultural references are almost inevitably English. So when analysts suggest (implicitly) that Asian/white people (who grow up in the USA or Britain) are *equally* able to lean toward either their White or Asian ancestries, this is a simplistic depiction – given that identifying more with Britishness is likely to be the default mode. Identifying also as Chinese, for example, is of course possible, but many mixed people are sensitive to others' expectations that they can demonstrate some "evidence" of their Chinese backgrounds (other than their physical appearance). Unless an individual grows up in a setting in which there are many Asian people around them (e.g. in certain cities in California), or in a family in which the Asian parent makes a concerted effort to expose that child to an Asian language, cultural practices and networks, it is unlikely that they would identify more strongly with an ancestry which is associated with an Asian country, culture, and history. As one Japanese and British participant in the higher education study put it, "It [Japanese ancestry] is my blood but not necessarily me, I consider myself British/Japanese because I grew up in the UK." (Aspinall & Song 2013).

Conclusion

While the notion of the societal mainstream has historically been associated with a dominant Whiteness, newer understandings of the "mainstream" point to how it is now much more diverse (Kasintiz et al. 2008; Jimenez 2017). In other words, just as theorists of segmented assimilation famously pointed to the disparate ways in which especially Asian and Latino second generation migrants to the USA could be incorporated into American society (Portes & Zhou 1993), we need to consider how multiracial people may identify and ally themselves simultaneously in relation to multiple ethnic and racial ancestries, and not just conceive of their allegiances in a binary, White or non-White manner.

Part of the difficulty with the whitening thesis is that there is a tendency to lump together socioeconomic gains and progress, vis-à-vis Whites, with social and cultural assimilation into Whiteness. While there is ample evidence of the socioeconomic success of many Asian Americans

(though of course, this is a large and heterogeneous category), there is much less empirical research that demonstrates the cultural attributes and social inclusion of Asians in the USA (Song 2003; N. Kim 2008). As discussed above, Asian origin people in the British context, such as the British Chinese, and Asian/White people, are still subject to negative forms of racialization and marginalization.

Significant growth in intermarriage with White people has resulted in growing numbers of multiracial people, such as Asian/White mixed people who are seen as expanding the boundaries of Whiteness. However, I have argued that studies that point to how Asian/White multiracial people are expanding the boundaries of Whiteness are far too simplistic, and characterize Asian/White people and experiences with sweeping generalizations, thus ignoring the diverse kinds of identifications and experiences reported by Asian/White mixed people.

I have questioned the empirical basis of arguments that Asian/White individuals are effectively joining the White category. Generalized arguments about “whitening” on the part of Asian multiracials are problematic in two respects: First, not all Asian/White multiracial people *can* tilt White even if they wish to; the fact that some Asian/White people are seen as White doesn’t consider the fact that there are many Asian/White people who look “Asian” or racially ambiguous to others (but not White). Without an entirely White appearance, Asian/White people’s belonging within Britain is often questioned. Second, it is not the case that all Asian/White multiracial people wish to “whiten”, as is often implied.

The whitening thesis in relation to Asian/White people needs to be tempered by the fact that there are mixed Asian/White people who actually identify as Asian, Asian/White people who do not partner with Whites, and who wish to maintain their ties with their Asian ancestries and co-ethnics – though doing so can become progressively more difficult with generational distance. Furthermore, it is critical that we do not conflate a wish to be White with a wish to be accepted as bona fide Britons (or Americans). As discussed above, concerns about having to assert national belonging stubbornly persist for many multigeneration Asians and Asian/White multiracials. For many Asian/White people in Britain, the negotiation of their identities is far from straightforward, whether in the cases of people who appear White, Asian, or somehow racially ambiguous to others.

Whiteness and its attendant social privileges have historically gone together, and in many ways, still do. But we need to unpack what we mean by “White”, as this category now includes a significant degree of diversity (even among “fully” White people). Debates about “whitening” are not likely to diminish, if many Asian/White multiracial people (like multiracial people of various backgrounds) continue to partner with White individuals, resulting in the growth of 2nd generation mixed people who have one White and one mixed parent. But this is still an empirically open question, and we must be careful not to overlook significant variations among multiracial people’s experiences.

Just as we need to unpack “White”, there are also many ways of being Asian these days, particularly among young adults (Kasintiz 2018). “Asian” today can include mixed race Asians, Asian people who have “fully” Asian parents who are highly acculturated 4th and 5th generation Americans, Asian kids in recent immigrant families, Asian young people with two different “Asian” backgrounds (Korean-Chinese, for example) and Asian adoptees. In other words, there are numerous ways of being Asian, particularly among young adults, but much of existing research tends to treat this hugely diverse category in very homogeneous way.

REFERENCES

- Alba, Richard, Brenden Beck, and Duygu Sahin. 2017. "The U.S. mainstream expands – again." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* DOI: 10.1080/1369183X.2017.1317584.
- Alba, Richard, and Jan Willem Duyvendak, Jan Willem. 2017. "What about the mainstream? Assimilation in super-diverse times", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/01419870.2017.1406127
- Alba, Richard and Victor Nee. 2003. *Remaking of Mainstream America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Alba, Richard and Nancy Foner. 2015. *Strangers No More*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Aspinall, Peter and Miri Song. 2013. *Mixed Race Identities*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Barber, Tamsin. 2015. *Oriental Identities in Super-diverse Britain*, London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. 2003. *Racism Without Racists*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Bratter, Jenifer. 2007. "Will "multiracial" survive to the next generation?" *Social Forces* 86 (2): 821-849.
- Brunsma, David. 2005. "Interracial families and the racial identification of mixed-race children: Evidence from the early childhood longitudinal study". *Social Forces* (84) 2: 1131-1157.
- Chang, Sharon. 2016. *Raising Mixed Race: Multiracial Asian Children in a Post-racial World*. New York: Routledge.
- Childs, Erica Chito. 2014. "A global look at mixing: problems, pitfalls, and possibilities." *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 35 (6):677-688.
- Duncan, Brian and Stephen Trejo. 2011. "Intermarriage and the intergenerational transmission of ethnic identity and human capital for Mexican Americans." *Journal of Labor Economics* 29 (2):195-227.
- Dyer, Richard. 1997. *White*. London: Routledge.
- Edwards, Rosalind, Suki Ali, Chamion Caballero, and Miri Song, eds. 2012. *International Perspectives on Racial and Ethnic Mixing and Mixedness*. London: Routledge.
- Frankenberg, Ruth. 1993. *White Women, Race Matters*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Fulbeck, Kip. 2006. *Part Asian, 100% Hapa*. Vancouver: Raincoat books.
- Gallagher, Charles. 2004. "Racial redistricting: expanding the boundaries of Whiteness". In *The Politics of Multiracialism*, edited by Heather Dalmage, 59-76. Albany: SUNY Press.
- Gans, Herbert. 1999. "The Possibility of a New Racial Hierarchy in the Twenty-first Century United States." In *The Cultural Territories of Race*, edited by Michele Lamont, 371-390. University of Chicago Press.
- Gordon, Milton. 1964. *Assimilation in American Life*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- Harris, David and Jeremiah Sim. 2002. "Who is multiracial? Assessing the complexity of lived race." *American Sociological Review* 67, pp. 614-627.
- Ignatiev, Michael. 1995. *How the Irish Became White*. New York: Routledge.
- Jimenez, Tomas. 2017. *The Other Side of Assimilation*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Kasinitz, Phil, Mary Waters, John Mollenkopf, and Jennifer Holdaway. 2008. *Inheriting the City*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Kasinitz, Phil. 2018. Private email communication, November 2017.
- Khanna, Nikki. 2004. "The Role of Reflected Appraisals in Racial Identity: The Case of Multiracial Asians." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 67 (2): 115-131.
- Khanna, Nikki. 2011. *Biracial in America*, Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.
- Kibria, Nazli. 2002. *Becoming Asian American: Second-Generation Chinese and Korean American Identities*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Kim, Claire Jean. 1999. "The racial triangulation of Asian Americans." *Politics & Society* 27 (1):105-38.
- Kim, Nadia. 2008. "Critical Thoughts on Asian American Assimilation in the Whitening Literature." In *Racism in Post-Racism America: New Theories, New Directions*, edited by Charles, Gallagher, 53-66. Chapel Hill, NC: *Social Forces*.
- Lee, Jennifer. 2015. "From undesirable to marriageable: Hyperselectivity and the racial mobility of Asian Americans," *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 662(1): 79-93.
- Lee, Jennifer and Frank Bean. 2007. "Reinventing the color line immigration and America's new racial/ethnic divide". *Social Forces* 86 (2): 561–586.
- Lee, Jennifer and Frank Bean. 2010. *The Diversity Paradox*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Liebler, Carolyn. 2016. "On the boundaries of race." *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 2 (4): 548-568.
- Loewen, James. 1971. *The Mississippi Chinese: Between Black and White*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Mengel, Laurie. 2001. "Triples – the social evolution of a multiracial panethnicity." In *Rethinking "Mixed Race"*, edited by D. Parker and M. Song, 99-116. London: Pluto Press.
- Murphy-Shigematsu, Stephen. 2012. *When Half Is Whole: Multiethnic Asian American Identities*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Muttarak, Raya and Heath, Anthony. 2010. "Who intermarries in Britain: explaining ethnic diversity in intermarriage patterns". *British Journal of Sociology* 61 (2):275-305.
- Neer, Nasar. 2008. "The politics of voluntary and involuntary identities: are Muslims in Britain an ethnic, racial, or religious minority?" *Patterns of Prejudice* 42 (1): 61-81.
- Office for National Statistics. 2005. "Focus on ethnicity and identity". London: ONS.

- Office for National Statistics. 2012. "Ethnicity and National Identity in England and Wales: 2011."
London: ONS.
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/ethnicity/articles/ethnicityandnationalidentityinenglandandwales/2012-12-11>
- Office for National Statistics 2014. "2011 Census Analysis: What does the 2011 Census tell us about inter-ethnic relationships?"
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/marriagecohabitationandcivilpartnerships/articles/whatdoesthe2011censustellusaboutinterethnicrelationships/2014-07-03>
- Osanami Törngren, Sayaka. 2016. "Attitudes toward interracial marriages and the role of interracial contacts in Sweden." *Ethnicities* 16 (4): 568-588.
- Osanami Törngren, Sayaka, Nahikari Irastorza, and Miri Song. 2016. "Toward building a conceptual framework on intermarriage". *Ethnicities* 16 (4):497-520.
- Pew Research Center. 2015. "Multiracial in America: Proud, Diverse and Growing in Numbers."
Washington, D.C.: June 11.
- Pew Research Center. 2017. "Intermarriage in the US 50 years After Loving v. Virginia", May 18, 2017.
Washington, D.C.
- Qian, Zenchao. 2004 'Options: racial/ethnic identification of children of intermarried couples', *Social Science Quarterly* 85 (3):746-766.
- Qian, Zhenchao and Daniel Lichter. 2011. "Changing patterns of interracial marriage in a multiracial society." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 73 (5):1065-1084.
- Rockquemore, Kerry Ann and David Brunsma. 2002. *Beyond Black: Biracial identity in America*,
Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Rodríguez-García, Dan. 2015. "Introduction: Intermarriage and integration revisited: International experiences and cross-disciplinary approaches." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 662: 8–36.
- Rodríguez-García, Dan, Miguel Solana, Miranda J. Lubbers, and Verónica de Miguel Luken. 2015.
"Contesting the nexus between intermarriage and integration". *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 662 November.
- Rondilla, Joanne and Paul Spickard. 2007. *Is Lighter Better?* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Root, Maria. 1992. (ed) *Racially Mixed People in America*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Root, Maria. 1996. (ed) *The Multiracial Experience*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Roth, Wendy. 2005. "The end of the One-Drop Rule? Labeling of multiracial children in Black intermarriages." *Sociological Forum* 20: 35-67.

- Song, Miri. 2017. *Multiracial Parents: Mixed Race Families, Generational Change and the Future of Race*. New York: NYU Press.
- Song, Miri. 2003. *Choosing Ethnic Identity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Song, Miri. 2009. "Is intermarriage a good indicator of integration?" *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 35 (2): 331–48.
- Spickard, Paul. 1989. *Mixed Blood*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Standen, Brian Chul Soo. 1996. "Without a Template: The Biracial Korean/White Experience." In *The Multiracial Experience*. Edited by Maria P. Root, 245-259. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Twine, France Winddance. 2010. *A White Side of Black Britain*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Vasquez, Jessica 2011. *Mexican Americans Across Generations: Immigrant Families, Racial Realities*. New York: NYU Press.
- Waters, Mary. 1990. *Ethnic Options*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Xie, Yu and Kimberley Goyette. 1997. "The racial identification of biracial children with one Asian parent: Evidence from the 1990 census." *Social Forces* 76: 547-570.
- Yancey, George. 2003. *Who Is White? Latinos, Asians, and the New Black/Nonblack Divide*. Boulder, CO & London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Yeh, Diana. 2014. "Contesting the 'Model Minority': Racialization, Youth Culture and 'British Chinese/'Oriental' Nights." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 37 (7): 1197-1210.
- Zhou, Min. 2004. "Are Asian Americans Becoming White?" *Contexts*, vol. 3 (1): 29-37.

¹ For instance, in the US 2010 census, we are told: "'White' refers to a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa. It includes people who indicated their race(s) as 'White' or reported entries such as Irish, German, Italian, Lebanese, Arab, Moroccan, or Caucasian." (US Census 2010 report). The OMB announced in January 2018 that the 2020 US census would not introduce a separate MENA (Middle Eastern or North African) category, which had been considered.

² According to the ONS, 62% of "other Black" people were in inter-ethnic unions.

³ "Asian American" technically includes Americans of Indian, Pakistani, or Bangladeshi ancestries, the dominant meaning of "Asian" in the US refers to people originating in East Asian countries such as Korea and China.